



Val Plumwood's Logic of Domination vs. Freya Mathews' Autopoietic Ecology: Ecological Psychosis and Arboreal Kinship in Le Guin's *The Word for World is Forest*

Sarah Hadi Razzaq

Assistant Lecturer, Department of Economics, University of Kufa, Iraq

Email: sarahh.alqaisy@uokufa.edu.iq

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Abstract— This research aimed to examines the novella *The Word for World is Forest* by Ursula K. Le Guin of 1972 using the dualistic approach of Val Plumwood on the ecofeminist logic of domination and Freya Mathews on autopoietic ecological theory. It assumes that the story anticipates ecological psychosis as the symptomatic future of colonial exploitation and gives a model of arboreal kinship based on mutual ecological awareness. The hierarchy between the two dualisms as criticized by Plumwood explains an anthropocentric, colonial stance of Captain Davidson, the Terran logging agenda, and the autopoietic model by Mathews offers a strict ontology concerning the relationship between Athsheans and their forest settings. Through a contrast between these views, the article shows how Le Guin dramatizes the dialectic between extractive domination and ecological reciprocity. This article will serve as a contribution to the current academic discussions on ecocriticism and speculative fiction in relation to environmental ethics, cultural survival, and the future of eco-relational futures.



Keywords— Autopoietic Ecology, Ecological Psychosis, Environmental ethics, Eco-feminist, Exploitation.

I. INTRODUCTION

The Word for World is Forest by Ursula K. LeGuin has long been remembered as one of the most politically charged of her works, which confronted both at once the Vietnam War, environmentalist movements, and feminist arguments vs. power. The text was first published in the anthology of Harlan Ellison, titled *Athshe*, in 1972, and later made into a novel, describing a colonized world, *Athshe*, where Terran (Earth) colonists explore it for resources, enslave the natives, and strive to apply extractive logics to a society based on forests. The novella is narrated along the border of colonialism, environmental destruction, and disappearance of culture (Le Guin, 1972).

The criticism of Le Guin has been examined in various perspectives: as an allegory of U.S. militarism in Vietnam, as the precursor to eco-feminist discussion, and as a piece of speculative anthropology which envisions radically

divergent ways of seeing the world. Le Guin identified herself with feminism, and was interested in non-violence and ecological awareness. She participated in demonstrations against the Vietnam War and nuclear weapons. These sympathies can be seen in several of her works of fiction, including the Hainish universe works. However, even with all the strong scholarly attention, one of the domains that remains unexplored is the way in which the novella can be interpreted in terms of the logic of domination and the philosophy of autopoietic ecology by Val Plumwood and Freya Mathews, respectively. The two sets of frameworks provide complementary views on the major issues of the novel, the devastating effects of the hierarchical thinking, and the possibility of alternative ecological kinships.

In *Feminism and the Mastery of Nature* (1993), Plumwood describes the logic of domination as a cultural

paradigm based on dualistic structures such as mind/body, man/woman, culture/nature, with one end being admired at the other, as the basis of legitimizing exploitation and oppression. Val Plumwood illuminates the relationship between women and nature, and between ecological feminism and other feminist theories. This kind of logic does not only form the basis of patriarchal and colonial domination but also applies to domination of nature by humans. A good example of this reasoning can be shown through the Terrans of LeGuin, and the treatment of the forest and its human population in the novel as they are treated by Captain Davidson of the Terran world in which trees are relegated to the status of timber, Athsheans to the status of laborers, and the world itself is turned into a resource front.

However, Mathews presents a philosophical response in *For Love of Matter* (2003) and *The Ecological Self* (1991), where she develops the concept of autopoietic ecology - an ontology that considers the natural world not as the dead matter but as self-organizing and self-maintaining systems with human beings as participants and not masters. This vision echoes the connection of the Athsheans to their world, in which the forest is not an object of possessions but a family member, with which they maintain mutual relationships of identity and life-giving.

The reading of Le Guin by Plumwood and Mathews in this way permits to highlight two movements into the light of the ecological psychosis that arises when domination becomes natural and the expression of an ecological relational form, arboreal kinship, as an alternative form of relationship. The former explains a situation where the extractivist ideology alienates human beings to ecological reality that generates violence not only in nature but in fellow human beings. The latter points to a more comprehensive vision of coexistence, in which the practices of dreaming, community life and devotion of the forest by the Athsheans perform an autopoietic ethic of interdependence. Ecocriticism, especially in its eco-feminist and materialist approaches examined the intersections between domination of marginalized bodies, colonized populations and nature highlights the ethical dimension of human-environment relation (Tsai, et al., 2017).

Lastly, the article presents the argument that Le Guin does not merely criticize in her novella. It also envisions what a transition between domination and kinship might look like when such transition is shaped by violence and defeat. The death of the Selver's wife, the Athsheans' turn to violence, and the permanence of the forest all indicate the conflict between erosion and recovery, ecological trauma and regeneration. In this regard, Le Guin predicts the

contemporary Le Anthropocene, multispecies justice, and planetary futures.

The process analysis is conducted in four phases. First the literature review and theoretical framework put the philosophies of Plumwood and Mathews in comparison with the current scholarship on Le Guin and ecocriticism. Second, the close analysis of the novella reveals that the structures contribute to understanding some of the most crucial instances of domination and kinship. Third, the synthesis part unites these strands by cogitating about the greater significance of ecocritical and environmental discourse (Hsu, Hsuan, 2016). Lastly, the conclusion summarizes the contributions of the article and directs the future research in eco-relational literary studies.

II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

The ecocritical approaches to Ursula K. Le Guin *The Word for World is Forest* have explored how the novel deals with the issue of environmental destruction, imperialism, and moral responsibility, but a considerably small number of scholars have explored a dual philosophical approach that combines the ecofeminist critique of domination by Val Plumwood with the ecological concept of autopoietic ecology by Freya Mathews. The article outlines the intersections of these frames with the current research on Le Guin, and puts work in context of the larger discussions on ecological ethics, colonial violence, and relational ontology that have already been made.

2.1 GREEN CRITICISM, FEMINISM, AND LE GUIN

The work of LeGuin has been the subject of ecocritical and feminist literary analysis since time immemorial. Initial interpretations focused on her fantastic world-making and ethos, and tended to interpret *The Word for World is Forest* as an American imperialism parable during the Vietnam War. According to critics, like Jameson (2005) and Attebery (2014), Le'Guin uses speculative fiction to reveal material and psychological origins of domination. Her ability to dramatise the interconnection of social and ecological hierarchies has been emphasised more recently in ecocritical work, particularly in ecofeminism (Gaard, 1993). Ecofeminism is a new movement which originated in the late twentieth century, and the parallels which exist in the structure of oppression of women and exploitation of the natural world are identified. Such scholars as Karen J. Warren (1990) and Greta Gaard (1993) show that both forms of domination are based on a dualistic manner of thought that favors masculinity, reason, and culture over femininity, emotion, and nature. In her fiction especially in *The Dispossessed* (1974), *Always Coming Home* (1985),

and *The Word for World is Forest* (1972), Le Guin challenges this hierarchy by imagining societies based on reciprocity, cooperation and ecological consciousness. Ecofeminist commentators like Deane-Drummond (2012) and Rountree (2020) have observed that the forest serves as an actual ecosystem and as metaphorical area of feminine generativity (Mathews, 2011).

2.2 VAL PLUMWOOD LOGIC OF DOMINATION

Plumwood (1993) in *Feminism and the Mastery of Nature* provides an in-depth examination of how western mind frames the concept of nature as subservient and exploitable. This idea by Plumwood is especially helpful in interpreting the text of *The Word for World is Forest* due to the clear description of this hierarchy by Le Guin who uses occupation of Athshe by the Terrans. The fact that Captain Davidson has turned the forest into timber and the Athsheans into crechies is an example of what Plumwood terms backgrounding and denial of dependency which is the propensity of the dominant groups to forget that they are in fact dependent on the systems which they are claiming autonomy and superiority. In this way, Davidson is not only a colonialist aggression representative but the embodiment of the rationalist indifference that allows the ecological destruction to pose as the progress. Plumwood as well criticizes illusion of mastery as the result of such separation (Kimiagari, Maryam, 2025). She claims that domination eventually creates an ecological crisis of reason, where the human subject, having perceived itself as alien to nature, does not possess the ability to be emphatic, reciprocal, and self-recognizing. This crisis is manifested by the psychological breakdown of Davidson, and the moral blindness of the Terrans in general. Not just an act on their part of exploiting a material, but an epistemic act of defining the world as object, resource, and property, their extraction of wood. In this way by revealing the senselessness of the logic of domination, Le Guin shows the human price of the latter: the deprivation of closeness to nature and the loss of humanity.

2.3 FREYA MATHEWS AUTOPOIETIC ECOLOGY

The ecological philosophy of Mathews is an addition and a continuation of the Plumwood criticism since it provides a constructive ontological vision. She suggests in her work *The Ecological Self* (1991) and *For Love of Matter* (2003) that the universe is made up of autopoietic systems, i.e. self-organising, self-producing systems which maintain themselves through dynamic interrelations. This model transcends Western mechanistic materialism, the focus here is that all the living systems, including human consciousness, are enrolled in an ever-recycling web of self-regeneration. The autopoietic ecology by Mathews opposes the separateness that supports domination. It calls

on the contemplation of reality as a process of subjective continuity, in which matter itself is communicative and self-realising (Messer, Neil., 2016). According to this perspective, ethical behaviour is not based on duty but is rather founded on an ontological acknowledgement of coexisting being. The nurturing of relational networks that support life is the role of human beings as agents of the autopoietic field, rather than as exploiters of the field.

This paradigm speaks to the description of the Athsheans by Le Guin. The forest is not a possession to the society they live in but a part of the self. The dreams they have are not escapist dreams but participatory experiences which preserve ecological balance. As Selver dream, he is related to the collective consciousness of the forest, which is metaphysical ecology and is parallel to Mathews idea of autopoietic intersubjectivity. On the other hand, the inability of the Terrans to dream is an indication of the lack of belonging to this system of reciprocal becoming. This perspective on the Athshean culture by means of Mathews helps to understand that Le Guin offers the example of arboreal kinship- the type of ecological consciousness based on the understanding of mutual autopoiesis (Messer, Neil., 2016). The trees are not figurative beings; they are living things, which form co-constitutive part of Athshean belonging. The repetitive theme of the forest dreaming itself to balance underscores a worldview where ethical life is indistinguishable to ecological responsiveness.

2.4 SYNTHESIZING PLUMWOOD AND MATHEWS

Despite the fact that both Plumwood and Mathews are ecofeminists, they, however, differ significantly in their approaches. Plumwood is running all over dismantling domination in pointing out how these rationalist hierarchies Latinized in the justification of violence against women and nature. On the other end, Mathews provides a constructive relational being metaphysics. Combining these perspectives offer a way of reading *The Word for World is Forest* that passes beyond critique toward constructive reimaging. Plumwood explain why the Terrans continue to blow things up, it is because their worldview is constructed upon belonging out of touch and superiority. Mathews, on the other hand, highlights the difference in the way the Athsheans do things by experiencing a relational ontology and autopoietic ethic. Such confrontation of these views in the novella, so bloody, dramatic, and transformative, presents the price of ecological psychosis and the opportunity of ecological recovery. And this combination in fact brings Le Guin into the greater intellectual tradition of deep ecology and new materialism, in which consciousness is diffused across life networks rather than clinging to human beings. Trans-corporeality refers to the idea that human bodies and the

material world are interconnected, and that meaning emerges through these interactions, as discussed by scholars such as Stacy Alaimo (2010) and Serenella Iovino (2016). These ideas are reflected in Ursula K. Le Guin's portrayal of the forest as a communicative agent that shapes dreams and actions even before it is named. A forest ecology is a delicate one. If the forest perishes, its fauna may go with it. The Athshean word for world is also the word for forest.

III. THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS

The ethics of the novella is altered when Plumwood and Mathews are brought together. It is not merely a bad judgment that the Terrans are dominated by, but an ontological mess, a psychosis created by alienation. Conversely, the Athsheans model is Mathews metaphysical inclusion, in which all entities co-create reality by means of the relationships. In such a way, the story by Le Guin turns out to be a living example of what Plumwood refers to as the ecological self one that is based on connection, and not independence.

3.1 TEXTUAL ANALYSIS: ECOLOGICAL PSYCHOSIS AND ARBOREAL KINSHIP

The Word for World is Forest by Ursula K. Le Guin literally drives the logic of domination that Val Plumwood is referring to into dramatic perspective. Comparing the Terran and Athshean cultures, Le Guin develops some kind of moral and ecological argument: one of them is more oriented on resource extraction and taking control, whereas the other one believes in reciprocity and dreaming. The narrative trajectory of the story in which these two versions of the world come together and their visions in some part change reveals a shift in an anthropocentric hold on reality to a more interpersonal ecology. Here is some detail of how Le Guin utilizes major characters, Captain Davidson, Selver and the forest itself, ecological psychosis as a symptom of colonial thinking and how she envisions the possibility of tree-family relationships as a result of self-awareness creation (Iovino, Serenella.,2016). Davidson's early thoughts set the tone for his view of both the forest world and his own role in the logging initiative. He does not see the Athsheans as men, but he sees men as liberators who will end what he calls the "darkness" of the planet, which simply refers to values that he does not share

3.2 THE CLIMAX OF CONFLICT (DAVIDSON VS. SELVER)

The last clash of colonial hegemony with the forest-mind. Even when his world burns Davidson is unyielding- a peak of ecological psychosis which prefers self-destruction to

the realization of the Other. The fact that he is sent to a deserted, desolate island is an ultimate ontological penalty, a complete alienation to the arboreal family and the life web of the world.

3.3 THE FRAGILE BRIDGE: SCIENTIFIC OBSERVATION AND ONTOLOGICAL EMBODIMENT

The scientist, Lyubov, put unsuccessful effort to divide the logic of domination by intellectual empathy. Although he is aware of the Arboreal Kinship of the Athsheans, he is not part of them, but a prisoner of the Western rationalist mind that attempts to study the forest instead of becoming a part of its living breathing. His intellectual relationship with Selver is a mediocre constructed on logic, but does not have the ontological richness of the experience of autopoietic. As Lyubov dies, this tenuous bridge collapses, and with the loss of innocence, the dialogue is over forever. His death imposes a tragic metamorphosis on Selver: in order to maintain the autopoietic wholeness of his world, he has to embrace the logic of death used by the enemy and become a killer. The Athshean soul is forever changed in this bloody shift; the forest is spared the colonial axe, but now exists plagued by the shadow of human beings that it had hoped to escape (Iovino, Serenella.,2016).

3.4 DAVIDSON AND LOGIC OF DOMINATION

Captain Davidson is the genuine Plumwoodian master subject, the human being who establishes a differentiation between him and nature and positions himself over it. He views the Athshean world in terms of dry, utilitarianism: the forest is timber, the Athsheans are creechies, and the planet is a frontier in a resource-undeveloped world. It is evident that his reasoning is divided in two in its first line, which Plumwood refers to as the essence of domination. The nonviolence of the Athsheans is a weakness, and the ecological communion between them is a kind of laziness, which he regards as a deficit. To Davidson, being a civilized person is being in control. He even writes that, the world must be cleaned by man, the words used are reminiscent of colonial and industrial discourse. This expression demonstrates what Plumwood would term backgrounding that is, rendering the input and agency of less powerful communities (women, colonized folks, ecosystems) unseen. The Terran colonisation fundamentally obliterates the Athshean work force and the life-giving forest, and pushes it into an economy where the only things that have a value attached to them are humans. The damage of this logic is manifested in the physical and how knowledge is generated. Davidson is not able to visualize the forest as a living being thus it is a mirror of his empty self. His rationalized psychological distance

actually ends up bringing the ecological psychosis the paper is discussing a separation with the living world. He consequently becomes deeply morally blind. As he participates in mass murder of Athsheans he justifies it as a necessary job, which is directed to the logging and the military efficiency. His brain, which is structured on domination, transforms atrocity into a measure of productivity (Jameson., 2005).

The description of Davidson by Le Guin serves as an allegory of Western modernity, perhaps on the psychological level. He is a human who has lost interrelation with the ecological context, such that Plumwood refers to as the crisis of reason, where the control of rationality breaks down into insanity. In the last scenes in which Davidson justifies genocide as the burden of civilization, his self-destructive cycle was revealed to him: the more he insists that he must be the one to control everything, the more he finds himself bound to his delusions of his superiority. The failure of dualism to support the coherent selfhood is the fall of Davidson in the words of Plumwood. His ecological psychosis is simply a moral, ontological illness that was created in the course of masquerading as entirely independent.

3.5 SELVER AND THE METAMORPHOSIS OF CONSCIOUSNESS

Being an Athshean witnessing the murder of his wife and the fall of his world, Selver is changing radically and disarranging the traditional dichotomy of victim and vengeance, peace and violence, nature and culture. Le Guin depicts Selver in a beautiful ambivalent manner: he is not turned into a god by right but by fantasizing violence into existence. The dreams in Athshean cosmology are not fantasies, but the means of exploring the living world. The dreaming that Selver has helps him to be a mediator between humans and nonhumans and helps him to be connected to the collective consciousness of the forest. This theme reflects in the concept of autopoietic participation proposed by Freya Mathews arguing that the spread of consciousness is not only a human phenomenon but also one that exists in the living systems. The dreams do not mean that Selver is creating something out of nothing; now he is co-creating with the forest, reaching a network of meanings that already exists. His change when he encounters the Terrans thus exhibits ecological dislocation as well as regeneration.

Selver however messes up that autopoietic harmony when she takes a step towards violence. Aiming at learning to kill, he falls into the fallacy of the Terrans domination logic. The Athshean revolt can be regarded as the reclaiming of agency which was taken by the Terrans- it was a necessary response to domination. But it is also the

loss of ecological innocence, to some degree taking the side of the master (Plumwood., 1993).

The psychological aspect of ecological ethics is revealed by the inner conflict of Selver. He struggles so as to balance two opposing worldviews, the dualism of the Terrans and the relational worldview of the Athsheans. These paradigms bargain in his dreams. The notion of autopoietic self-correction introduced by Mathews can be used as a philosophical prism through which one might see the reason behind Selver finally returning to dreaming. His end vision of the forest remaining active even after the destruction is a clue that Athshean mind is able to swallow traumas and transform them into resurrection. The story by Selver is essentially an allegory of the process of transitioning ecological psychosis into autopoietic healing.

3.6 THE FOREST AS LIVING SUBJECT

The forest is not merely a setting, it is literally the protagonist of the story, its moral mouthpiece. Le Guin constructs it as a self-regulating system that is intelligent and resembles the autopoietic universe of Mathews. The forest dreams with the help of the Athsheans, who, in their turn, maintain everything in balance by means of rituals and restraint. The results of the Terrans disrupting such a network are ecological and spiritual in nature. Deforestation is like deleting the consciousness. The ontology of Mathews also allows to read the forest as an ontological subject of some sort, all material possesses a little self-realizing agency. The admiration of the forest by the Athsheans is not primitive animism rather than an awareness of mutual autopoiesis. They are ecologically minded due to the ontological intimacy: since the forest is mustered, the self is injured. This subjective world of relations is in striking contrast with the tool-based logic of the Terrans that involves the forest as the dead matter (Mathews, Freya.,2016).

The ideological punch of this contrast is explained through the theory by Plumwood. The Terrans and their deforestation project send nature to the backburner on one hand, they destroy the very foundation of their survival, and in the other hand it is the pretend that nothing can go wrong. The forest, when it retaliates, through the rebellion it provokes on Selver and his people, gives a kind of ecological resistance. By doing so, Le Guin makes the forest agency not merely a passive victim, but also a participant of the moral economy in the story. The picture of the forest healing at the end of the novella reveals the rule of self-renewing systems by Mathews. Life revolves through restoration even after the human violence. Through her redefinition of the forest as an autopoietic community capable of re-establishing its own vitality, Le Guin demonstrates that relational ontologies are not

limited to being the casualties of the master regimes to which they are supposed to be sacrifices.

3.7 DREAMING AS AN ECOLOGICAL COMMUNICATION

In the story by Le Guin dreaming is the way in between human and nonhuman worlds. To the Athsheans, a dream is not something sub-conscious: it is an ecological communication. This concept suits well with the communication universe proposed by Mathews, in which every being contributes to the meaning making (Le Guin., 1972). The Terrans, in turn, are unable to dream which demonstrates that they are deprived of the autopoietic consciousness. Davidson brands sleep inefficient and dreams weak-this like a view towards which industrial capitalism is a murderer of imagination and rest. The ignorance of the Terrans is explained by Plumwood through instrumental rationality: the desire of the Terrans towards productivity obliterates anything that does not help them (Plumwood., 1993). Dreaming as something that is difficult to transform into a commodity is a kind of rebellion against the domination. The fact that Selver dreamed once again of the dream following the revolt is an indication that can remake a messed-up ecology. The fact that he spends his days dreaming of violence is indicative of what Plumwood refers to as critical reflexivity- the realization of the personal part in domination. It is through dreaming that Selver is able to rejoin the beat of the forest which is autopoietic and transforms trauma into insight. Ecological healing, Le Guin claims, does not only take place when plants grow back, it is also about minds re-adjusting, an empathetic awakening of consciousness and new perception (Roy, Srirupa., 2023)

3.8 SYNTHESIS: TO RECONCILE DOMINATION AND AUTOPOIESIS IN THE ECOLOGICAL VISION OF LE GUIN

The Word for World is Forest by Ursula K. Le Guin is fundamentally this philosophical epic battle between two gigantic world systems one which holds that ought to encompass everything and one which is about reciprocity and mutual care. The logic of domination by Val Plumwood identifies the way that just continue to pile up hierarchies mind/body, culture/nature, man/woman, colonizer/colonized and that the project of Terrans appears valid. To the other end, the concept of autopoietic ecology provided by Freya Mathews is a roadmap to the kind of life that is relational in which all organisms are components of the self-organizing energy of the Earth. Reading the two structures side-by-side, the novella becomes a sort of an ecological psychosis allegory and a remedy to it, of how harmful it is to cut and separate ourselves out of the living world and how to re-insert the

consciousness back into the world. Le Guin creates this philosophical opposition by pitting cold and mechanical self of Davidson against the increasing ecological consciousness of Selver. Davidson essentially involves the forest as a resource and the Athsheans as labor, which undermines the backgrounding critique by Plumwood, of viewing nature and the feminine as something can subjugate. His mental disintegration, his inability to perceive the kinship as something more than a means to an end, reveals the alienation that Plumwood termed the final west-self pathology. Meanwhile, the autopoiesis of Mathews demonstrates the existence of the Athsheans: dreaming, recollection, and forest, in and of themselves constitute a dynamic self-renewing cycle. There is no division of mind and matter in their world, and ecology is an expansion of consciousness. In the case of the invasion by the Terrans, they are not only colonizing the political, but also discontinuity by metaphysical means because of imposing dualism on what was originally united (Tsai, et al., 2017).

Le Guin identifies that change in Selver at that crossroads of paradigms. To retaliate the aggression of the Terrans with violence is as it were a two-fold stab of insubordination--he struggles against the domination but also imitates the logic, adopts the reasoning of the master. In the prism of Mathews, the autopoietic balance is broken in his rebellion too: a self-system is pushed into an unhealthy evolution whenever it is subject to outside pressure. That is precisely the tragedy of The Word for World is Forest, liberation by means of mimicry and surviving due to ontological discord. Le Guin does not entirely resolve that contradiction; she employs it to demonstrate how a non-human and a human can be affected by colonial modernity emotionally. The combination of Plumwood and Mathews transforms the book to an ecological parable of relational ethics. Plumwood deconstructs the dualism to explain the reason why the Terrans do not perceive Athsheans as individuals; autopoiesis by Mathews demonstrates how the Athsheans preserve the meaning of life by living a living reciprocity with their surroundings. In their combination, they establish a direction of domination to kinship. The forest ceases to be merely a background in this synthesis and is made an active moral actor that must assert itself, talk about itself. The sentient forest that is used by Le Guin is a precursor to subsequent eco-philosophical ideas, particularly new materialism, in which matter is itself given agency.

Bringing together speculative storytelling and ecological philosophy, Le Guin constructs the literary paradigm that Plumwood as well as Mathews envisioned a re-incorporation of human consciousness into the web of

life (Tsai, et al., 2017). The end scenes of the story, when Selver hesitates over the death of Davidson, and realizes that there was no one way back, are the point of new moral ontology. This world of Athshean is unable to return to innocence but to develop towards wisdom based on relational humility. Le Guin describes ecological kinship as an act of practicing self-correction *within* longing rather than longing *after* some pre-industrial purity-what Mathews refers to as ontopoietic communion and in which being is understood as fundamentally shared.

IV. CONCLUSION: ETHICS OF ECOLOGICAL KINSHIP

The *Word for World is Forest* written by Le Guin can be interpreted as an exclusive or closed system of knowledge. It is not merely a political satire of colonialism, but it is also a philosophical introspection of how people behave towards everything outside of us. The book turns the tables on the repressive power systems and demonstrates how the most repressive form of colonization occurs in one's cognitions, when begin to think of plants and animals as things to manipulate. By drawing the curtain back, exposing to the destructive nature of that worldview, Le Guin is calling on to the new ways that are founded on sharing and caring about the ecosystems of one another. Ecofeminism concepts provided by Plumwood provide an easy framework which can explain the existence of violence against the nature and the culture. Her interpretation of the perception of women, especially, as being disconnected with the earth is reflected in the Athsheans who behave towards their forest as a playground. The Terrans arriving on Athshe destroy it not only because they are greedy, but also because of this gigantic-old myth that human beings are superior to all the things. It is that feeling that human beings are overly estranged by nature; almost like observers but not players. That alienation literally conceals the sentient forest and the humanness of the Athsheans in the book and results in some sort of mental division as the Terrans are no longer connected to the living systems that literally bind them. Again the script is reversed by the concept of autopoietic ecology as introduced by Freya Mathews. She reminds that life is not a network that happens by itself, but rather is part of the environment. The Athsheans reflect this - there is no consciousness and ecology, but a flowing world. They keep in touch with each other in dreams and shared recollection and that is the way they tie in with earth in this ontopoietic communion that Mathews is talking about. When the Terrans break that bond, it's not only the problem of the loss of biodiversity. It is all about tearing off the red line that gives life its meaning. That break demonstrates that human are killing ourselves by

damaging the environment, as they all belong to the same becoming.

It is not a bleak story of Selver, but rough indeed. Killing Davidson is a liberation and a terrible trauma at the same time it is a paradox and demonstrates how violence can still be sustained by resistance. Le Guin is not sanitizing it, she goes under the hood and explores the way this trauma transforms ecological consciousness. Selver eventually understands that the Athsheans will never be able to return to a clean state. His understanding of personal inabilities and the necessity of recovery comes like a blow. It is a call to self-criticism by Plumwood and a go-back-to-self-repairing system by Mathews. It should be through the cessation of the destructive roles human play and reconnecting in order to rebuild. When examining the framing of the story by Plumwood and Mathews, it is possible to notice that the author uses the allegory to play modern life. The conquest of the Terrans of Athshe is similar to the industrial societies conquering the planet; the Athshean trauma is the equivalent of anxiety in the Anthropocene. The imagination of Le Guin turns out to be a test experiment and it challenges morals. It is the breaking out of that fantasy of control which clears the fog of the ecological psychosis.

The notion echoes particularly loudly in these times of environmental studies. In the work of Le Guin, even in her early work, there were hints of the fact that ecological exploitation is not an isolated phenomenon, but it is also linked to the exploitation of other genders and races; that is the idea that today occupies ecofeminism and environmental justice. The narration of this story compel to account the effects of the colonization of reflections in the sense of what is non human. It is a literal move out of contemplating ecology on a high-brow level into the world of daily practice. The novel presents the place where these two meet in a Bumpy cross-road and in many instances conflict with each other but at times intersect. Due to this, the forest turns into a labyrinth of destruction and its revival human can walk through. The fact that the forest is dying is not the forest gone but it indicates what new insights must begin to occur. It is a tremendous bow to the notion that actual morality has little to do with feeling guilty or nostalgic but rather with re-entering a net of reciprocity.

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